

John Quincy Adams to Andrew Jackson, March 12, 1821, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (JOHN QUINCY ADAMS) TO JACKSON.¹

¹ This letter is in *Am. St. Pap., For. Rel.*, IV. 750. In the same volume are Jackson's three commissions here mentioned (pp. 751, 752).

Washington, March 12, 1821.

Sir, By direction of the President of the United States, I have the honor of transmitting to you three Commissions,

1.—As Commissioner to receive possession of the Provinces of East and West Florida, conformably to the Treaty between the United States and Spain, concluded on the 22d of February 1819.

2.—As Governor of the whole Territories of which possession is to be thus taken.

3.—As Commissioner vested with special and extraordinary powers, conformably to the stipulations of the Treaty and to the Act of Congress for carrying the same into execution; copies of both which are also among the enclosures with this letter.

Together with the Spanish Ratification of the Treaty, there was transmitted to the Spanish Minister at this place a Royal Order, to the Captain General and Governor of the Island of Cuba, for delivering possession of the Provinces of East and West Florida, according to the stipulations of the second article of the Treaty.²

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2 Dated Oct. 24, 1820. The copy is in the Jackson MSS.

Colonel James G. Forbes has been appointed by the President Agent and Commissary to deliver this Royal Order to the Governor of Cuba, to concert and arrange with him the execution of it, and to receive any documents or archives which may be at the Havanna, and which are stipulated to be delivered by this article. A copy of his Instructions is herewith enclosed;³ by which you will perceive, that he is to deliver over to you all such documents or archives as he may receive at the Havanna. It is desirable

3 Dated Mar. 10, 1821. The copy is in the Jackson MSS. On the transfer of Florida archives see R. R. Hill, *Descriptive Catalogue of Papeles procedentes de Cuba* (Washington, Carnegie Institution, 1916), pp. xx–xxiii.

that those relating to each of the two Provinces should be kept distinct from each other, and that this Government should be informed generally of their character and quantity.

Colonel Forbes is to take passage at New York, in the United States' Sloop of War *Hornet*, Captain Read; and, on arriving at Pensacola, is to give you immediate notice, that you may repair thither to receive possession of that place. The *Hornet* is to remain there to escort the transports, in which the Spanish officers and troops, and their baggage, are to be conveyed to the Havanna. The Spanish Minister⁴ has expressed a strong wish, that no troops of the United States may be introduced into Pensacola or St. Augustine, until *after* the evacuation by those of Spain. The object of this request being to avoid any possible unpleasant altercations between the soldiers of the two nations, the President thinks it reasonable to comply with it, unless you should be of opinion that it will be attended with inconvenience. In that event, he relies that you will take every measure of precaution which may be necessary to guard against any such collisions between the soldiers; and he trusts with confidence that in every arrangement for the evacuation, the utmost delicacy will be observed to avoid every thing which might tend to wound the feelings of any of the Spanish officers, soldiers, or subjects, who are to remove.

4 Don Francisco Dionisio Vives.

It is the President's desire, that you should appoint General Gaines, or such other officer as you may deem expedient, to receive possession of St. Augustine; and that the same Instructions should be applied to the execution of that service. The United States' Brig Enterprize, or Sch. Porpoise, will be ordered to proceed to that place, to escort the transports which are to convey the Spanish officers and troops thence to the Havanna. The care of providing the transports at both places is referred to you. The number of troops at either place is not known, but supposed to amount to about 500 men at each. The stipulation is understood to include civil as well as military officers, and provisions as well as passage. Instructions will be given by the Secretary of War to the Quarter-Masters and Commissaries to furnish to your orders provisions and transports for the conveyance of the Spanish officers and troops.⁵ It is expected they will be supplied at New Orleans and Mobile, for those to embark within the Gulph, and at Savannah and Charleston for those going from St. Augustine.

5 See Calhoun to Jackson, Mar. 22, 1821, in *Correspondence of John C. Calhoun*, p. 181.

A copy and translation of the Royal Order to the Governor of Cuba, for delivering the possession of the Provinces, are among the enclosures herewith. You will observe, that it includes expressly the islands appertinent to them. It will be proper that attention should be paid to taking possession of all these islands; but it may not be necessary that a formal delivery of them in every case should be made.

On receiving from the Governors of West and of East Florida possession of those respective Provinces, it will be proper to exchange certificates of the time and mode of the transaction: orders for the delivery of any military posts within the Provinces will be expected, and they will be occupied by detachments of our troops as you may deem expedient.

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As soon as the possession shall be transferred, you will, in pursuance of your authority over the ceded territories, issue proclamations announcing the fact. A form, adopted from that which was issued on the first occupation of Louisiana, is herewith enclosed, to be modified as the circumstances in your opinion may require.

The powers, vested in you by the enclosed Commissions, are also conformable to those which were entrusted to the Governor of Louisiana, under an Act of Congress of similar import. The President is satisfied that they will be exercised by you with a due regard as well to the privileges and usages of the inhabitants under the Government to which they have been subject, as to the personal and social rights to which they will be entitled by the stipulations of the Treaty, and as associates to the Union of these States. The money paid into the Spanish treasury before the delivery of possession, and whatever may be due thereto at that date, is to be considered as the property of Spain. Payments and debts subsequent to that date will belong of course to the United States.

The laws of the United States relating to the revenue and its collection, and those relating to the introduction of persons of color, being extended, by the Act of Congress, to the Territory, the execution of them will be superintended by officers to be appointed for the several collection districts to be established by the President conformably to the law.

Your compensation as Governor will be at the rate of five thousand dollars a year. As Commissioner for receiving possession of the Provinces, such reasonable expenses as may be incurred will be allowed. Whenever your military command ceases, your salary as Governor will commence.

In the taking of possession of St. Augustine and East-Florida, similar proceedings to those relative to the occupation of West-Florida will be proper. Both Provinces being placed under your direction, the Proclamation to be issued there will be in your name; and General Gaines, or such other officer as you may appoint, will be instructed to consider himself, for all the purposes of the Government, subject to your orders.

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At the ensuing session of Congress, it is to be presumed one of the earliest objects of attention, to that body will be, to make further provision for the Government of these territories. The President wishes you, in the interval, to collect and communicate to this Department any information, relating to the country and its inhabitants, which may be useful to the exercise of the legislative authority of the Union concerning them.

For the expenses incident to the services herewith required, you will draw upon this Department. Strict economy is to be observed in incurring them; and I have urgently to request the transmission, as early as possible, of all the accounts resulting from them, with the vouchers necessary for their settlement at the Treasury.

I am with great respect, Sir, your very humble and obedt. servt.